GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4361
ANSWERED ON:12.08.2002
COTTON CROP WASTED BY VIRUS
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether farmers in the cotton growing States of the country are facing crisis due to Cotton Crop being wasted by virus;

(b) if so, the details and facts thereof; and

(c) the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a): The farmers in the cotton growing States of Punjab, Rajasthan and Haryana facethe problem of Cotton Leaf Curl Virus affecting the cotton crop. The incidence varies from 0-15% in Haryana and Punjab. In other states of Central and Southern India, noleaf curl incidence has been noticed and normally it does not occur. In Rajasthan, only mild incidence of the disease has been reported.

(b): Cotton Leaf Curl Virus disease is caused by Gemini virus and is transmitted byWhitefly (Bemisia tabaci) an insect. Its first appearance in Rajasthan occurred in 1993- 94. Subsequently, the disease spread to Punjab and Haryana.

(c): Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on intensive CottonDevelopment Programme (ICDP) in 13 cotton growing States, under the Technology Mission on Cotton which includes a component of Promotion of Integrated Pest Management to minimize the damages caused by diseases and pests. The funding pattern of the scheme is mostly 75:25 sharing basis between the Government of India and the States. For the Year 2002-2003, the share of the Government of India is Rs.2000.00 lakh.

State Governments have been advised to follow the strategies developed byIndian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in this regard which include the following:

(i) Creation of Buffer Zone with resistant desi cotton varities along the international border in the North Western parts of the country.

(ii) Cultivation of resistant G. hirusutum varieties/hybrids like RS 875, Anjali (LRK516), LHH 144, F 1861, Omshankar, H 117, HHH 223 in areas adjoining zones.

(iii) Avoiding the growing of cotton in citrus orchards.

(iv) Elimination of alternate hosts/weeds such as Bhendi, Kangi Buti, Peli Buti etc.

(v) Integrated management of vector whitefly through seed treatment with systematic insecticides, neem products, biopesticides.

(vi) In addition, varieties/hybrids possessing inbuilt resistance to cotton Leaf CurlVirus are alone recommended for commercial cultivation by Government of India. Because of the effective implementation of the strategies and constant monitoring, the disease spread has been contained.